

## **Health Department Awarded Primary Care Medical Home Certification from the Joint Commission**

The Lake County Health Department/Community Health Center has earned The Joint Commission's Gold Seal of Approval® for Primary Care Medical Home (PCMH) Certification. The Gold Seal of Approval® is a symbol of quality that reflects an organization's commitment to meeting optional standards demonstrating a commitment to patient-centered care. The certification is a special add-on option for Joint Commission-accredited ambulatory care organizations.

Through this distinction, the Health Department is among 139 Joint Commission Accredited Organizations (with 1286 sites) across the nation with Primary Care Medical Home Certification. Ten of these organizations are located in Illinois. This is the fourth Joint Commission accreditation for the Health Department. Behavioral Health, Primary Care and the Opioid Treatment Program are already accredited.

The Health Department's community health centers underwent a rigorous on-site survey in January. During the review, a team of Joint Commission expert surveyors evaluated compliance with standards related to how effectively the primary care clinician and the interdisciplinary team work in partnership with patients to provide comprehensive, coordinated and patient-centered care.

Established in 2011, The Joint Commission's PCMH Certification, awarded for a three-year period, encourages accredited ambulatory care organizations to ensure patients receive timely and appropriate treatment. PCMH Certification can potentially result in increased patient satisfaction, improved patient outcomes and reduced overall costs to the health care system.

In addition, PCMH Certification provides ambulatory care organizations with the processes needed to improve patients' access to care. It also encourages these organizations to focus on educating patients and showing them how to self-manage their illness or condition.

"The Health Department is delighted to receive certification from The Joint Commission, the premier health care quality improvement and accrediting body in the nation," said Tony Beltran, the Health Department's Executive Director. "By achieving PCMH Certification, we are operating within a framework to provide better care that is coordinated and tracked to allow for an effective interdisciplinary team approach."

The Lake County Health Department maintains community health centers in Waukegan (2) as well as North Chicago, Zion, Highland Park and Round Lake Beach. These centers provide a wide range of services, including medical, dental and WIC, to more than 42,000 residents. In addition to primary care services, patients have access to a wide range of interconnected services and resources that are part of a comprehensive public health system.